

Abstract

Disclosed is a system for performing online data queries. The system for performing online data queries is a distributed computer system with a plurality of server nodes each fully redundant and capable of processing a user query request. Each server  
5 node includes a data query cache and other caches that may be used in performing data queries. The data query, as well as request allocation, is performed in accordance with an adaptive partitioning technique with a bias towards an initial partitioning scheme.

Generic objects are created and used to represent business listings upon which the user may perform queries. Various data processing and integration techniques are included  
10 which enhance data queries. An update technique is used for synchronizing data updates as needed in updating the plurality of server nodes. A multi-media data transfer technique is used to transfer non-text or multi-media data between various components of the online query tool. Optimizations for searching, such as the common term optimization, are included for those commonly performed data queries. Also disclosed is  
15 a system for targeting advertisements that are displayed to a user of the system.